

# FAQ's

1. **After I submit my application online, how long will it be until I am notified of my project's acceptance?**

Completed applications enter the review process on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month. Once the review is underway, it will be approximately 30 days before you will be notified of your application's status. Applications with insufficient information may take longer to begin the review process. If we need more information to complete your application, the Maryland Made Easy Administrator will contact you.

2. **How will my application be evaluated?**

The evaluation is based on the criteria set forth in the ***FastTrack*** Executive Order and on the ***FastTrack*** website (Can we link to the EO here) – with preference toward projects that create a large number of jobs and promote smart growth in targeted development or redevelopment areas around the State. The ability to accept applicants into ***FastTrack*** depends on how many projects are currently under staff review.

The Maryland Made Easy administrator will provide an initial review for all ***FastTrack*** applications using the answers provided by the applicant, as well as any additional information necessary for evaluation. Final review and approval will occur in coordination with the Lt. Governor's office, the Department of Business and Economic Development, and other relevant government entities.

3. **If accepted into *FastTrack*, when do I receive my expedited review timeline?**

The State will provide your expedited review timeline within approximately 30 days of your acceptance.

4. **Does expedited review of my project mean expedited approval of all the permits needed?**

No. While we aim to provide approvals for all permits that you are seeking, we may not be able to approve every permit.

5. **What are my options to pursue my project if I am not accepted into *FastTrack*?**

If your project is not accepted into the ***FastTrack*** you may still pursue your project through the normal steps you would have taken before there was a ***FastTrack*** process. The Maryland Made Easy Administrator will help guide you through the process and provide names and contact information for staff at the state agencies you may need to contact to apply for your permits.

**6. Will I be able to receive expedited review of my local or federal permit applications through *FastTrack*?**

No. We will notify the local jurisdiction or federal agency that the State has approved your project as a priority and ask them to work with us on an expedited timeline. However, we cannot mandate that the federal or local permit process be expedited.

**7. Can I reapply to *FastTrack* at a later date if my project is not accepted?**

In some cases. In replying to applicants that are not accepted, the Maryland Made Easy administrator will detail the areas in which your application did not meet the identified criteria. If modifications can be made to meet the criteria, you may be eligible to reapply at a later date.

**8. What are "Targeted Ecological Areas"?**

Targeted Ecological Areas are our State's highest conservation priorities, identified by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. These lands include large blocks of forests and wetlands, rare species habitats, aquatic biodiversity hotspots and areas important for protecting our water quality, coastal ecosystems and important fisheries. These ecologically important areas have been designated as conservation targets for Program Open Space Stateside.

**9. Why are portions of some Targeted Ecological Areas developed?**

In some cases, businesses and housing existed within Targeted Ecological Areas prior to their designation. The need to protect entire ecosystems and watersheds sometimes means including the communities existing around them.

**10. What is a Priority Funding Area (PFA)?**

PFAs were created by the 1997 Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Act. They closely correspond to local governments growth area--where infrastructure and services exist and are planned for residential and economic development. State funding for infrastructure is mostly limited to these areas. PFAs can range from small towns to high density urban areas. Several programs exist within subsets of PFAs to incentivize higher density development and economic development. These include enterprise zones, BRAC Zones, Main Streets, and TODs.

**11. Why are there protected lands in Priority Funding Areas (PFAs)?**

Priority Funding Areas are locations where the State and local governments want to encourage and support economic development and new growth. PFAs can be quite large, such as the areas in Maryland inside the Washington Beltway and Baltimore Beltway. It is common to find small and sometimes large areas of protected land in the PFAs, preserved for recreation and also to protect various natural resources.